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NSC BRIEFING

22 January 1958

25X1

(short form)

I. Returns, which are probably reliable and about 93% complete, give rightist General Ydigoras a small plurality, are shown below:

A. Ydigoras 154,000 37%) Percentages of votes counted thus far
Cruz 136,000 33) (30,000 still uncounted)
Mendez 125,000 30)

1. It is therefore conceivable that Cruz may win a narrow plurality.

B. Election returns issued by Flores earlier apparently deliberately falsified to show Ydigoras in strong lead.

1. Flores may have calculated that by doing this he would provoke a coup which might perpetuate him in office.

2. Or, it could have been effort to help Ydigoras.

C. Since no candidate can win an absolute majority, congress will choose between two top runners.

II. Situation ripe for trouble. Flores' fake returns have heightened already serious tensions.

A. Ydigoras has said "I would not make trouble, but the people would."

B. PR leaders have announced that Ydigoras should be named president

1. PR may call out its mobs to riot.

2. Communists also prefer Ydigoras.

C. Congress is likely to name Cruz president if he is a close runner up.

1. If congress does not name Cruz, it might prefer to disband, inviting a military coup.

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D. The army is the key. Influential officers hate Ydigoras and would probably seek to prevent him coming to power.

1. Strongest army faction opposed to Ydigoras is led by Col. Carlos de Leon.

2. Coup would spark serious popular protests by Ydigoras and the PR.

E. Cruz Salazar, in public statements, has paved the way for a possible coup.

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